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FLOATING SEA-MARKS.

THE engineer may often find it a work of skill and patience to set up a sea-mark on a solid foundation of rock, as in the case of the Eddystone lighthouse, or to erect a beacon on submerged sands, like the Girdler or the Shingles, on the north side of the Princes Channel leading into the Thames; but he seldom finds it nowadays an impossibility. There are positions, however, where no base is to be found upon which to build, and here recourse must be had in the interests of navigation to a floating sea-mark. Sands, shoals, and rocks, incapable of bearing any structure, or grouped so extensively as to require more than a lighthouse or beacon at considerable intervals, must be lighted and marked in another fashion; or it may be that even while a permanent structure is building, or a dangerous wreck is in course of dispersion, the obstruction must in the meantime be temporarily denoted by a moored mark.

The most primitive forms of floating sea-marks were no doubt a log, a spar, and a cask. Now, we have many and refined distinctions, and the whole subject of buoyage has become of so much importance, and has attracted so much attention, that in May of last year a Conference was assembled under the presidency of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, with representatives from the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, the lighthouse authorities, and the rivers Thames, Mersey, Clyde, Tyne, Tay, and Humber, to go into the entire matter, particularly with a view to consider a proposal for a uniform system of buoyage for the United Kingdom, it being understood that up to the present time various methods of marking are adopted in different localities. The Conference continued its sittings till April of this year, and has dealt exhaustively with the whole question.

The largest, most useful, and most conspicuous floating sea-marks we possess, are our floating lights. The navigator is familiar with the appearance above the horizon, as he pursues

his course, of an open globe or ball in framework, which, apparently rising, gradually reveals below it first the mast, and then the hull of a red-painted vessel, bearing on her sides, in immense white letters, the name of some well-known danger, such as Owers, or Kentish Knock. If a lightship be passed off the Irish coast, she will be coloured black with a white stripe, but in other respects will be much like an English one, save perhaps in the case of the vessel placed to mark the Barrels Rock, which carries at her mainmast head a black barrel.

The Goodwin Sands afford as good an example of sea-marking by means of floating objects as we have around our shores, while they will be perhaps the most familiar—by name at all events. Here, besides buoys of several classes, to which we shall have occasion to refer presently, is moored at the north-east end of the sand the *Goodwin* lightship, to the west the *Gull*, on the east or outside the *East Goodwin*, and at the south-west end the *South Sand Head*. Literally in all weathers—as they have done for years and years past—ride unflinchingly these stout staunch craft, which run in size from about one hundred and fifty to two hundred tons builder's tonnage. Sea-marks by day, lights on the waters by night, and practically as permanent guides to the mariner as any granite-built tower standing on a rock. How is it managed? one may well ask. It is done partly by the design and strength of the timber-built vessel, partly by her mushroom-shaped anchor weighing a couple of tons, but more especially by the extraordinary length of the severely proved one and a half inch chain cable connecting the two, which in one instance is as much as three hundred and fifteen fathoms, or six hundred and thirty yards. Such elasticity, such a spring, is given by the length of chain—ordinarily two hundred and ten fathoms—and the weight of the vessel is such a mere cork, so to speak, at the end of it, that there is far less chance of her parting her moorings in a hurricane than there is of a light kite, provided with the best cord that can be bought, snapping its line

in a high wind. Riding in a heavy gale with her full length of chain out—and it is hove in or paid out according to the force of the wind and state of the sea—the worst hours are passed when both wind and tide are opposed to her. When the tide makes back against the gale, it is surprising what comparatively easy work, even in the roughest weather, the well-designed boat makes of it. In cases where no bearings can be taken, where the lightship lies perhaps miles out of sight of land to mark some outlying sand, a deep-sea lead, which weighs over thirty pounds, attached to a line, is kept overboard, and by duly observing this, it can always be determined whether the vessel is retaining her proper position, or driving from her station. Were such a thing to happen, as a light vessel to break adrift or drive so far as to be no longer a guide, the ball or other beacon at her mast-head would be struck by day, and her ordinary lights discontinued by night; the room of these last being taken by a red light at each end of the vessel, whilst a red flare light would be shown every quarter of an hour.

The ordinary lights of neighbouring lightships are so varied, of course, in character as to be distinctive. Of the four Goodwin vessels named, the first in order shows three flashes in quick succession every minute; the second is a twenty seconds' revolving light; the third, a green fifteen seconds' revolver; and the fourth, a fixed bright light. The intensity of some of our floating lights equals that which would be produced by between eight and nine thousand standard candles. In every instance, lamps and reflectors, forming what is called the catoptric character of light, are used. The difficulties attendant on the motion of the vessel have so far interfered fatally with the adoption of the dioptric system, or illumination by means of lenses. The revolving apparatus, where there is one, is managed by clockwork which is furnished with what is known as a centrifugal governor, by which the revolutions are controlled to a nicety in the worst of weather. Rapeseed oil is the illuminant. The lanterns have the appearance of forming part of the masts up and down which they slide. They are kept, as a rule, when lowered during the day, in a lantern-house built on deck. The beacons at the mast-heads are also varied to a certain extent. Thus, instead of the ordinary ball, the *Would* off the south end of Hasborough Sand has a diamond, the *East Goodwin* has a half diamond over a diamond, and the *Goodwin* has three masts with balls, the ball at the mizen being six feet lower than that at the foremast head.

Of more recent growth than lights and balls as part of the equipment of many of the floating lights, is the powerful fog-signal which is brought into play during fog. Ironically termed a 'siren,' nothing can be more disagreeable than the din raised by this instrument, and its iron trumpet, worked by a hot-air engine. When in use, the horn is pointed to windward. The sound produced is exactly like the bellowing or lowing, if that be more correct, of a great cow. A further means of distinction in the shape of high and low notes has been of late introduced, to guard against confusion with the horns of navigating vessels, and other lightships. For distinctive purposes, also, the blasts are varied at different stations. So disagreeable

is this fog-signalling duty acknowledged to be, rest and sleep being pretty well out of the question 'in the same ship with it,' that in addition to extra pay to certain of the men for acting as signal-drivers, the whole crew receive what they call 'Noise-money,' an allowance calculated at the rate of so much an hour for the time the signal is actually in operation.

To make our floating lights useful again in another way, the experiment of connecting one of them with the shore by means of an electric telegraph cable is about to be tried. The *Sunk* is the vessel chosen. She lies about nine miles in a straight line from the Essex shore, in the vicinity of a dreaded danger known as the Long Sand. The cable will be landed at Walton-on-the-Naze, and the wires connected with Harwich and Ramsgate. Whenever, therefore, a vessel is wrecked within sight of the lightship, or is heard of there as needing assistance, a message can be at once despatched to either or both of these places from the *Sunk*, and the life-boats will doubtless be on the spot as quickly as it is possible for them to be. A model illustrating the proposed experiment will be remembered by visitors to the Fisheries Exhibition as by no means one of its least interesting features. The telegraph cable will be carried nearly up to the bows of the lightship from the ground through the centre of a double chain cable, and will be fitted with appliances to prevent it from fouling with the moorings or becoming twisted through the swinging of the ship. Should the experiment prove successful, we may expect to see many of our floating lights thus connected with the land.

We have now, or shall have very shortly, something like sixty lightships on the coasts of England and Ireland, exclusive of those under the jurisdiction of port and harbour authorities. Scotland's seaboard needs apparently no regular lightship. The chief danger the floating lights encounter, singular to say, seeing that they are at anchor, is that of collision. Last year, nearly twenty cases occurred of English lightships being run into and more or less seriously damaged by passing vessels. The penalties imposed by Act of Parliament for this ungrateful behaviour are occasionally enforced, as it only seems right they should be, looking at the possible gravity of the consequences.

The oldest station for a lightship is the far-famed *Nore*, which was marked as far back as 1732. The vessel lies in the best position for entering the Thames and Medway and to clear the *Nore* Sand. The lightship riding in the greatest depth of water is that lying between the Land's End and the Scilly Isles, in forty-two fathoms, near the cluster of rocks known as the Seven Stones; whilst the one most distant from the land is that placed to mark the outer Dowsing Shoal in the North Sea, about thirty-three and a half miles from Spurn Point in Yorkshire. All lightships give direct warning in the event of a vessel approaching too closely to the shoals in their vicinity by firing a gun and hoisting the signal, 'You are standing into danger.' They also, in certain cases, by means of special call-rockets of great brilliancy, fetch assistance from the shore to vessels in distress.

Following upon the lightships, and seen often

in the intervals between them like a line of skirmishers along the edge of the sand, come the buoys, which have of late been associated with several very interesting experiments. Broadly speaking, we can dispose of their general features in a few words. All the navigation buoys now constructed are, like our war-ships, made of iron, wood being quite superseded by it. In shape, there are but two kinds of buoys commonly used—conical, or those which show the pointed top of a cone out of the water; and ‘can,’ or those which have a flat top. They are so distinctive that the one has been seldom if ever mistaken for the other. The former ride higher out of the water, can be seen farther, and are altogether more conspicuous. They range in size nowadays from six feet in height to thirteen feet in the case of the former, and to eight feet in the case of the latter. There are, however, spherical buoys which are simply, as their name implies, globular, and show half or more of their shape above the flotation line. Like the lightships, the buoys preserve their stations admirably, as a general rule, and are in the case of the buoys of the largest size moored with the chain that has done its duty for three years in holding one of the floating lights. A long length of chain is here again depended on to preserve position, equalling about three times the depth of water in exposed situations. The sinkers or weights to which the lower end of the buoy chain is attached are simply flat pieces of iron of an oval shape, of from six to forty hundredweight, with a shank or handle in the centre. The distinctive mountings or beacons for buoys at the present time are balls or globes, cages, diamonds, triangles, inverted triangles, and St George’s and St Andrew’s crosses. The mountings are at the upper end of a staff, the lower end of which is fixed in the top of the buoy.

The chief aim of most of the recent experiments with buoys has been to secure appliances in connection with them that will denote their position at night or in foggy or thick weather. And first we will take the gas-lighted buoy, which is spherical in shape, and forms in itself the reservoir for the supply of gas to be used. From this reservoir a tube projects about twelve feet or so above water, carrying at the upper end a lantern and burner so protected that the flame is proof against wind and water. The illuminant is compressed oil gas. This gas is made from paraffin once refined; it is subsequently drawn by means of a compression pump from the gasometer, and forced into gas-holders at a pressure of one hundred and fifty pounds to the square inch. These gas-holders are conveyed alongside the buoy, which is thereupon connected to one of them with a flexible tube, and the buoy is filled in a short time at a pressure of about ninety pounds to the square inch. The burner is set to work, and the light left to burn day and night till the next supply of gas is required, which may not be for a month or two or even longer, according to the quantity of gas consumed and the size of the reservoir. The pressure of gas in the burner is so beautifully regulated by a very delicately constructed automatic appliance, that whatever the quantity of gas in the buoy may be, the supply to the light is always the same. The flame commonly shown is equal in intensity to

about twenty candles, and can be seen fairly well as a rule about a mile and a half off, or perhaps much farther under certain conditions. In the daytime, however, such a buoy may generally be passed without an observer being able to detect the light.

In consequence of the increased and increasing speed of vessels, and the more powerful lights carried by the better class of them, the necessity has arisen for rendering navigation lights as often as possible group-flashing or occulting in character. A good specimen of the occulting light is that at the North Foreland, which gazes steadily at you, so to speak, and then suddenly gives you a most knowing wink, which every half-minute it repeats. As an example of the group-flashing light, we cannot do better than cite the floating light at the Royal Sovereign Shoal in the English Channel, which shows three flashes in quick succession every minute. Such lights as these can hardly be mistaken by the mariner. The gas-lighted buoy will perhaps play a greater part in the future for the purpose of marking the navigable channels of rivers, where it can also be easily got at, than at sea as a navigation buoy. The idea of lighting floating marks in this way having been patented, the cost of a buoy of this character, including royalty, is something like four hundred pounds.

The next floating sea-mark we will turn to is the Automatic Signal Buoy or Whistling Buoy. This buoy, called also after its inventor the Courtenay Buoy, is so constructed, that the water in which it floats, through the motion of the buoy itself, acts as a piston in a tube, which, beginning below the buoy, passes upwards through its centre. Air, which enters the tube by a valve above the level of the water, thus becomes compressed, and is forced through a small pipe at the upper end of the tube, sounding a large whistle or bell-piece which is fitted above all. This ingenious instrument is said to have made itself heard distinctly as far off as seven miles; but however that may be, it has been found so effective at much shorter distances, that it has been and is being widely put under practical trial. An automatic signal buoy costs much the same as a gas buoy.

The Bell Buoy is another form of floating sea-mark largely used. The movement of the buoy itself here again sets the signal in operation. The bell generally weighs about three hundredweight, and is fixed above the buoy within supports, being struck by clappers that hang on all sides of it. An apparently ingenious method of sounding these bells by means of a rolling shot, instead of striking-rods, has also been devised, as well as plans by which similar results could be achieved by the agency of wheels within the buoy or without. There are bell boats as well as bell buoys, but the principle of working the signal is much the same in each instance, the difference being solely in the form of the floating body.

Experiments have been also made of late with a view to render buoys visible in the dark by means of luminous paint. We have not heard, however, so far, that on buoys at sea any decidedly satisfactory results have been attained in this way; but the trials, we believe, are not yet formally concluded.

A form of sea-mark which is used off some of the shores of the Continent, and especially in the approaches to and channels of rivers, and known as a spar-buoy, has recently been tried in our own waters. It is so designed that a spar or mast stands almost perpendicularly out of the water, in some instances to a height of about eighteen feet. In the river Weser the channel is thus marked on one side, the effect being described as similar to that presented by a row of black posts, each being surmounted by a letter of the alphabet, which is also marked on the body of the buoy. These spar-buoys have proved, however, as sea-marks to be far inferior to conical buoys.

Buoys are either painted a single colour, red or black; or they are varied by vertical stripes or white horizontal rings; or they are checkered with white. The impossibility of distinguishing a red buoy from a black one even at so short a distance as a quarter of a mile, under certain conditions of light, has been long known and recently testified to again by many witnesses.

The members of the recent Buoyage Conference may certainly be congratulated on the success attending their labours. To use the language of the President of the Board of Trade, 'the Conference has resulted in a practical agreement by all the parties concerned both as to the objects to be sought and the means by which they may be accomplished.' The recommendations made with a view to secure uniformity of practice, are, that as you proceed with a main flood tide, or enter a harbour, river, or estuary, you shall find conical buoys on your right hand, or starboard side, all of a single colour. On your left hand, or port side, you should have 'can' buoys of another characteristic colour, either single or party-colour. Where middle grounds occur in a channel, their ends should be marked by spherical buoys with horizontal white stripes. The beacons carried by buoys should be painted in one dark colour, globes being placed on the starboard hand buoys, cages on those to port, diamonds on the buoys marking the outer ends of middle grounds, and triangles on those at the inner ends. Buoys on the same side of a channel to be distinguished by names, numbers, or letters; or where necessary, by beacons. Special and isolated positions to be marked by bell buoys, gas-lighted buoys, automatic signal buoys, and the like. Wrecks to be marked, as now, by green buoys, with the word 'Wreck' in white letters; and, when forming a serious danger or obstruction to navigation, to be indicated by a lightship similarly coloured, showing on one end of a yard two balls placed vertically, and on the other a single ball, the latter being on the side nearest the wreck. The vessel to be laid near the side of the wreck next mid-channel, when possible, and at night, lights substituted for the balls.

The cost of this branch of the public service is something like seventy thousand pounds per annum; a single lightship of improved construction costing, when complete, eight thousand pounds, or more. No public money, we will venture to say, is better spent, both in the interests of the sea-faring public and of humanity at large; whilst none yields a larger interest on outlay, if we have regard to the value of the lives, ships, and freights it is the means of saving. We have often been

struck by the strong feelings of gratitude manifested by all classes of seamen towards the Trinity House and the Scottish and Irish Lighthouse Commissions for the assistance rendered to navigation by all this excellent and beautiful work. Sometimes these feelings take a practical turn, and many a present of books and papers is made, and many a kindly service rendered when occasions offer, to the crews who man our lights on the waters; while not many years since, one of the Collectors of light-duties received anonymously a bank-note accompanied by the following words: 'Please find ten pounds sterling, which ten pounds please send to your lighthouse authorities towards the support of lighthouses, the great and blessed protection to poor sea-faring folk of all nations on coming to dangerous and rocky coasts. From one who is deeply impressed with a sense of humility and gratitude to a loving and merciful God.'

THE ROSERY FOLK.

CHAPTER XIX.—HOW LADY MARTLETT HUMBLLED THE DOCTOR.

'I HATE him, and I'll humble him yet!' said Lady Martlett, with her eyes flashing, as she saw Jack Scales coming along the path towards the drawing-room window. 'How dares he assume such a high tone towards me! I believe he knows I'm in here alone,' she said to herself angrily as he passed; 'and he has gone by on purpose to pique me. It is his conceit. He thinks I care for him. Oh, it is unbearable!' she cried impetuously. 'I'll bring him as a suppliant to my knees; and when I do,' she continued, with a flash of triumph in her dark eyes, 'he shall know what it is to have slighted and laughed at me!'

She fanned her flaming cheeks, and started up to pace the room, when once more there was the sound of the doctor's footsteps, as, in utter ignorance of Lady Martlett's presence, he returned along the gravel walk, thinking deeply over the knotty points of his patient's case.

'Heigh-ho-ha-hum!' sighed, or rather half-yawned Jack Scales, as he turned in at the window very slowly and thoughtfully, and for the moment did not see that the room was occupied.—'Ah, Lady Martlett, you here?' he said coolly.—'What a lovely day!'

'Yes, doctor; charming,' she said, softening her voice.

'And this is a lovely place.—Your home, the Court, is, of course, far more pretentious.'

'I was not aware that there was anything pretentious about Leigh Court,' returned Lady Martlett coldly.

'Well, pretentious is perhaps not the word,' said Jack; 'I mean big and important, and solid and wealthy, and that sort of thing.'

'Oh, I see.'

'Been up to the Academy, of course?' asked Scales.

'Yes,' replied Lady Martlett coldly. 'There was nothing, though, worth looking at. I was terribly bored.'

'Hah! I suppose you would be. I had a couple of hours. All I could spare. There is some admirable work there, all the same.'

'I was not aware that Doctor Scales was an art critic.'

'Neither was I; but when I see a landscape that is a faithful rendering of nature in some beautiful or terrible mood, I cannot help admiring it.'

'Some people profess to be very fond of pictures.'

'I am one of those foolish people, Lady Martlett.'

'Did you notice the portraits of some of the fashionable beauties, Doctor Scales?'

'O yes,' he said; 'several of them, and it set me thinking.'

'No? Really!' said her Ladyship, with a mocking laugh. 'Was Doctor Scales touched by the beauty of some of the painted canvases with speaking eyes?'

'No; not a bit,' he answered cheerily—'not a bit. It set me wondering how it was that Lady Martlett's portrait was not on the walls.'

'I am not a fashionable beauty,' said the lady haughtily.

'Well, let us say a beauty, and not fashionable.'

A flash of triumph darted from Lady Martlett's eyes. He had granted, then, that she was beautiful—at last.

But Jack Scales saw the look.

'I have no desire to be painted for an exhibition,' said Lady Martlett quietly.

'But I thought all ladies loved to be admired.'

'Surely not all,' she replied. 'Are all women so weak?'

'Well, I don't know. That is a question that needs discussing. I am disposed to think they are. It is a woman's nature; and when she does not care for admiration, she is either very old, or there is something wrong.'

'Why, you libel our sex.'

'By no means, madam. I did not say that they love the admiration of many. Surely she must be a very unpleasant woman indeed who does not care for the admiration of one man.'

'He is caught!' thought Lady Martlett, with a strange feeling of triumph. Perhaps there was something else in her sensation, but she would not own it then.

'Perhaps you are right,' she said quietly. 'It may be natural; but in these days, Doctor Scales, education teaches us to master our weakness.'

'Which most of us do,' he returned, with a bow. 'But really, if your Ladyship's portrait, painted by a masterly hand, had been hung'—He stopped short, as if thinking how to say his next words.

'Well, doctor?' she said, giving him a look which he caught, weighed, and valued on the instant at its true worth.

'It would have had a crowd around it to admire.'

'The artist's work, doctor?'

'No, madam; the beauty of the features the artist had set himself to limn.'

'Is this a compliment, doctor, or a new form of bantering Mrs Scarlett's guest?' demanded Lady Martlett, rather bitterly.

'Neither the one nor the other, but the simple truth.'

Lady Martlett fought hard to conceal the exultation; nay, more, the thrill of pleasure that

ran through her nerves as she heard these words; but though outwardly she seemed quite calm, her cheeks were more highly coloured than usual, and her voice sounded deeper and more rich.

Scales told himself she was plotting to humble him to the very dust, so he stood upon his guard.

Perhaps he did not know himself. Who does? If he had, he might have acted differently as he met Lady Martlett's eyes when she raised hers and said: 'So, then, Doctor Scales has turned courtier and flatterer.'

'No; I was speaking very sincerely.'

'Ought I to sit here,' said Lady Martlett, 'and listen to a gentleman who tells me I am more handsome than one of the fashionable beauties of the season?'

'Why not?' he replied, smiling. 'Is the truthful compliment so displeasing?'

'No,' she said softly; 'I do not think it is; and beneath her lowered lashes, the look of triumph intensified as she led him on to speak more plainly.

'It ought not to be,' he continued, speaking warmly now. 'I have paid you a compliment, Lady Martlett, but it is in all sincerity.'

'He will be on his knees to me directly,' she thought, 'and then'—

'For,' he still continued, 'woman generally is a very beautiful work of creation: complicated, wonderful—mentally and corporeally—perfect.'

'Perfect, Doctor Scales?'

'Yes, madam; perfect. Your Ladyship, for instance, is one of the most—I think I may say the most perfect woman I ever saw.'

'Doctor Scales!' she said aloud, as she drew herself up, half-angry, but thoroughly indorsing his words; and then to herself, in the triumph that flushed her as she saw the animation in his eyes and the colour in his cheeks: 'At last he is moved; he never spoke or looked like that before.' Then aloud: 'You are really very complimentary, Doctor Scales;' and she gave him a sharp arrow-like glance, which he saw was barbed with contempt.

'Well, yes, Lady Martlett, I suppose I am,' he said; 'but it was truly honest, and I will be frank with you. Really, I never come into your presence—I never see you— But no; I ought not to venture to say it to you.'

'Why not?' she asked, with an arch look. 'I am not a silly young girl, but a woman who has seen something of the world.'

'True, yes,' he said, as if encouraged; and Lady Martlett's bosom rose and fell with the excitement of her expected triumph.

'Well,' she said, smiling, and that smile had in it a power that nearly brought him to her feet; 'you were saying: "I never see you"'

'Exactly. Yes,' he returned quickly; 'I will say it. You'll pardon me, I know. I am but a weak man, with an intense love'

She drew a long breath, and half turned away her head.

'For the better parts of my profession.'

Lady Martlett's face became fixed, and she listened to him intently.

'Yes; I confess I do love my profession, and I never see you in your perfection of womanly beauty, without feeling an intense desire to—to—well—dissect you.'

Lady Martlett started up from the seat, where, in a studied attitude, she had well displayed the graceful undulations of her figure, and stood before Doctor Scales, proud, haughty, and indignant. Her eyes flashed; there was an ardent colour in her cheeks, which then seemed to flood back to her heart, leaving her white with anger.

'How dare you!' she began, in the mortification and passion that came upon her; and then, thoroughly mastered, and unable to control herself longer, she burst into a wild hysterical fit of laughter and hurried out of the room.

Scales rose and stood watching the door as it swung to, and there was a look of tenderness and regret in his countenance as he muttered: 'Too bad—too bad! Brutal and insulting! And to a woman—a lady of her position and refinement! I'll go and beg her pardon—ask her to forgive me—make confession of why I spoke so. —No. Put my head beneath her heel, to be crushed by her contempt? It wouldn't do.'

CHAPTER XX.—OLD JOHN IS PATERNAL, AND FANNY MAKES A PROMISE.

'Now do give me a rose, Mr Monnick; do, please.'

'Give you a rose, my dear?' said John Monnick, pausing in his task of thinning out the superabundant growth amongst the swelling grapes. 'Well, I don't like to refuse you anything, though it do seem a shame to cut the poor things, when they look so much prettier on the trees.'

'Oh, but I like to have one to wear, Mr Monnick, to pin in my breast.'

'And then, as soon as it gets a bit faded, my dear, you chuck it away.'

'O no; not if it's a nice one, Mr Monnick. I put it in water afterwards, and let it recover.'

'Putting things in water, specially masters, don't always make 'em recover, my dear,' said the old man, picking out and snapping off a few more shoots. 'Hah!' he cried, after a good sniff at the bunch of succulent pieces, and then placing one acid tendril scrap in his mouth, twisting it up, and munching it like some ruminating animal—'smell that, my dear; there's a scent!' and he held out the bunch to the pretty coquettish-looking maid.

'De-licious, Mr Monnick,' said the girl, taking a long sniff at the shoots. 'And now you will give me a nice pretty rosebud, won't you?'

'I allus observe,' said the old man thoughtfully going on with his work, 'that if you want something, Fanny, you calls me Mister Monnick; but if I ask you to do anything for me, or you have an order from the master or missus, it's nothing but plain John.'

'Oh, I don't always think to call you Mr Monnick,' said the girl archly.—'But I must go now. Do give me a nice just opening bud.'

'Well, if you'll be a good girl, and promise only to take one, I'll give you leave to fetch your scissors and cut a Homer.'

'What! one of those nasty common-looking little dirty pinky ones?' cried the girl. 'No, thank you; I want one of those.' As she spoke, she pointed to a trellis at the end of the greenhouse, over which was trailed the abundant growth of a hook-thorned climbing rose.

'What, one o' my Ma'shal Niels?' exclaimed

the old gardener. 'I should just think not. Besides,' he added with a grim smile, 'yaller wouldn't suit your complexion.'

'Now, don't talk stuff,' cried the girl. 'Yellow does suit dark people.—Do cut me one, there's a dear good man.'

'Yes,' said the old man; 'and then, next time you get washing out your bits o' lace and things, you'll go hanging 'em to dry on my trained plants in the sun.'

'No; I won't. There, I promise you I'll never do so any more.'

'Till nex' time.—I say, Fanny, when's Mr Prayle going back to London?'

'I don't know,' replied the girl, rather sharply. 'How can I tell?'

'Oh, I thought p'raps he might have been telling you last night.'

'Telling me last night?' echoed the girl. 'Where should he be telling me?'

'Why, down the field-walk, to be sure, when he was a-talking to you.'

'That I'm sure he wasn't,' cried the girl, changing colour.

'Well, he was a-wagging his mouth up and down and making sounds like words; and so was you, Fanny, my dear.'

'Oh, how can you say so!'

'This way,' said the old man, facing her and speaking very deliberately. 'What was he saying to you?'

'I—I wasn't'—

'Stop a moment,' said the old man. 'Mr Arthur Prayle's such a religious-spoken sort o' gent, that I dessay he was giving you all sorts o' good advice, and I'm sure he wouldn't like you to tell a lie.'

'I'm not telling a lie; I'm not.—Oh, you wicked, deceitful, spying old thing!' she cried, bursting into tears. 'How dare you come watching me!'

'I didn't come watching you, my dear. I was down there with a pot, picking up the big gray slugs that come out o' the field into the garden; for they feeds the ducks, and saves my plants as well.—Now, lookye here, my dear; you're a very pretty girl, and it's very nice to be talked to by a young man, I dessay. I never cared for it myself; but young women do.'

'How dare you speak to me like that!' cried the girl, flaming up.

'Cause I'm an old man, and knows the ways o' the world, my dear. Mr Arthur comes down the garden to me and gives me bits o' religious instruction and advice like; but if he wants to give any to you, I think he ought to do it in the house, and give it to Martha Betts and cook at the same time.'

'It's all a wicked story,' cried Fanny angrily; 'and I won't stop here to be insulted!'

'Don't, my dear. But I'm going to walk over to your brother William's to-night, and have a bit o' chat with him 'bout things in general, and I thought I'd give him my opinion on the pynte.'

Fanny had reached the door of the vinery; but these words stopped her short, and she came back with her face changing from red to white and back again. 'You are going to tell my brother William?'

'Yes, my dear, as is right and proper too.'

Master aren't fit to be talked to; and it's a thing as I couldn't say to missus. It aren't in the doctor's way; and if I was to so much as hint at it to Miss Raleigh, she'd snap my head off, and then send you home.'

The girl stood staring mutely with her lips apart at the old gardener, who went on deliberately snapping out the shoots, and staring up at the roof with his head amongst the vines. One moment her eyes flashed; the next they softened and the tears brimmed in them. She made a movement towards the old man where he sat perched upon his steps calmly ruminating with his mouthful of acid shoots; then, in a fit of indignation, she shrank back, but ended by going close up to him and laying her hand upon his arm.

'Leave that now,' she said.

'Nay, nay, my lass; I've no time to spare. Here's all these shoots running away with the jushe and strength as ought to go into the grapes; and the master never touches them now. It all falls upon my shoulders, since he's ill.'

'Yes, yes; you work very hard; but I want to talk to you a minute.'

'Well; there then,' he said.—'Now, what is it?' and he left off his task to select a nice fresh tendril to munch.

'You—you won't tell Brother William?'

'Ay, but I shall. Why, what does it matter to you, if it was all a lie and you warn't there?'

'But William will think it was me, Mr Monnick; and he is so particular; and— There, I'll confess it was me.'

'Thankye,' said the old man, with a grim smile; 'but my eyes are not bad enough to make a mistake.'

'But you won't tell William?'

'It aren't pleasant for you, my dear; but you'll thank me for it some day.'

'But it would make such trouble. William would come over and see Mr Prayle; and you know how violent my brother can be. There's plenty of trouble in the house without that.'

'I don't know as William Cressy would be violent, my dear. He's a very fine young fellow, and as good a judge o' gardening as he is of his farm. He's very prov'd of his sister; and he said to me one day—'

'William said—to you?'

'Yes, my dear, to me, over a quiet pipe, as he had along o' me one evening in my tool-house.

"John Monnick," he says, "our Fanny's as pretty a little lass as ever stepped, and some day she'll be having a chap."

'Having a chap!' echoed Fanny, with her lip curling in disgust.

"And that's all right and proper, if he's a good sort; but I'm not going to have her take up with anybody, and I'm not going to have her fooled."

'I wish William would mind his own business,' cried Fanny, stamping her foot. 'He's got a deal to talk about; coming and staring at a stupid housemaid.'

'Martha Betts aren't stupid, my dear, and a housemaid's is a very honourable situation. The first woman as ever lived in a house must have been a housemaid, just the same as the first man was a gardener. Don't you sneer at lowly occupations. Everything as is honest is good.'

'O yes, of course.—But you won't tell William?'

'I feel, my dear, as if I must,' returned the old man, taking the girl's hand, and patting it softly.

'You're a very pretty little lass, and it's quite right that you should have a sweetheart.'

'Sweetheart, indeed!' cried Fanny in disgust.

'But that Mr Arthur aren't the sort.'

'How do you know?' cried the girl defiantly.

'Cause I'm an old man as has seen a deal of the world, my dear, and I've got a grand-daughter just like you. I shouldn't have thought it of Mr Prayle, and I don't know as I shan't speak to him about it myself.'

'O no, no!' exclaimed the girl excitedly.

'Pray, don't do that.'

The old man loosened her hand to sit gazing thoughtfully before him, while the girl once more grasped his arm.

'There's on'y one thing as would make me say I wouldn't speak to William Cressy and Mr Arthur.'

'And what's that?' demanded the girl.

'You a-giving of me your solemn promise as you won't let Mr Arthur talk to you again.'

'I'll promise.'

'Yes,' said the old man; 'it's easy enough to promise; but will you keep it?'

'Yes, yes; that I will.'

'You see he's a gentleman, and you're only a farmer's daughter, my dear; and he wouldn't think no more of you, after once he'd gone away from here; and then you'd be frettin' your pretty little heart out.'

'Then you won't tell Brother William?'

'Well, I won't.'

'Nor yet speak to Mr Arthur?'

'Not this time, my dear; but if I see any more of it, I shall go straight over to William Cressy, and then he'll do what seems best in his own eyes.'

'I think it would be far more creditable of you, gardener, if you were attending to your vines, instead of wasting your time gossiping with the maids,' said a stern sharp voice.—'And as for you, Fanny, I think you have enough to do indoors.'

'If you please, ma'am, you are not my mistress,' said the girl pertly.

'No, Fanny, and never shall be; but your mistress is too much taken up with her cares to note your negligence, therefore I speak.—Now, go!'

A sharp answer was upon Fanny's lips; but she checked it; and flounced out of the vinery, leaving Aunt Sophia with the gardener.

'I am surprised at you, John Monnick,' continued the old lady. 'Your master is helpless now, and you take advantage of it.'

'No, ma'am, no,' said the old fellow, who would not bring the question of Fanny's delinquency into his defence. 'I'm working as steadily as I can.'

'Humph!' ejaculated Aunt Sophia. 'I never saw these vines so wild before.'

'Well, they are behind, ma'am; but you see this is all extry. Master always done the vines himself, besides nearly all the other glass-work; and the things do run away from me a bit.'

'Yes, if you encourage the maid-servants to come and talk.'

'Yes, ma'am; shan't occur again,' said the old fellow grimly; and he went on busily snapping

out the shoots, while Aunt Sophia went out into the garden, to meet Arthur Prayle, who was walking thoughtfully up and down one of the green walks, with his hands behind him, one holding a memorandum book, the other a pencil, with which he made a note from time to time.

ENGLAND'S MUSICAL FUTURE.

HAVING heard a good deal lately about the great unmusicalness of the English as a nation, and being impressed with the vagueness with which this final judgment was usually substantiated, I must confess to feeling an incipient desire to carp, in my character of Briton, against what may be called a very sweeping assertion. The prime origin of our deficiency was based, in the opinion of certain arbiters, on an alleged flaw in the national temperament: the absence of the artistic sense in our mental development. Nor would they hold forth any hope that this might ever be remedied to a complete and satisfying degree. Doubtless, we should improve, and were rapidly improving; so much was acknowledged. But the average Englishman had no inborn musical perception, like, for instance, the German. He did not regard music as a factor of existence, but as an accessory; a thing which could be well dispensed with, but which was desirable, partly because it was the mode, and partly, no doubt, owing to a certain latent emotional sympathy, which, they did not deny, existed to a greater or less degree in nearly all civilised humanity, in connection with music. This, of course, principally of the uncultured masses. It was not denied that within the last forty or fifty years, a vast musical change had taken place among the better classes in England. But that was in no way relied upon as an earnest of future equality with other nations; it was merely regarded as a result of the march of civilisation and culture. While other nations were already far forward on the road towards the perfection of musical development, not only receptive but creative, we were but painfully arriving at the first stage of the journey, and commencing to be good listeners. There was that in us that would prevent our passing a certain point as a nation; exceptions there might be, but in no pre-eminent degree. We should never produce a Beethoven or a Mendelssohn; and the best proof of that, in their estimation, was that we had not already done so; just as the female sex has never produced a composer, and therefore never will.

Now, let us go to the root of this accusation, and in the presence of the indisputable fact, that we are not at the present day so musical as other nations, endeavour to discover what it is that has hindered us in this branch of mental development. Let us consider first of all the emotional attributes understood by the term artistic. To be artistic is, I take it, to have a deep sympathy with, or to experience vivid emotion in the presence of the beautiful, whether it be the beauty of natural scenery, of the human form, of poetic thought, or of the artificial combinations of sounds called music. It is to derive pleasurable or intellectual sensations from harmony of colour, form, sound, or thought; and to develop there-

from, by force of imitation at first, and afterwards by original conception, the faculty of reproducing similar or new beauties with the aid, in some arts, of masterly combinations of effects previously observed, but in poetry and music by purely artificial means. To a certain extent, even poetry is but the result of an abnormal development of the faculty of observation or perception combined with a rare delicacy of thought and utterance. But music is the only art where the creative faculty pure and simple is employed. Music itself is a creation of man. The painter or the sculptor can but reproduce what he and every one may have seen, or combinations thereof; but the musician can create what no one has hitherto heard. The sea, the mountains, and the sunsets have existed for all time; but a composer may produce music to-morrow that shall be in some part outside human experience, and capable of awakening an emotion never before evoked in the listener. Having prelected thus far, we may proceed to inquire into the cause of our deficiencies both creative and receptive.

The art of music is so modern a development, that it is only within the last two hundred years that anything having a title to the name of music has existed. Modern or music proper had its rise in Italy, where most of the arts in their modern form also had their rise. Italy may be said to have been the cradle of the arts. The first participator with Italy in the newly discovered glories of the musical art was Germany. Italian opera and Italian church music found a sympathetic response in that country. But observe that this sympathy was at first entirely receptive. Until Glück founded a national school of music for his countrymen, Germany remained content to be catered for by Italy. No creative genius showed itself then for years. There were indeed composers, in the ordinary acceptance of the word; but they were servile imitators and plagiarists, whose creations, while possessing all the defects of the then Italian form, lacked its sole recommendations, originality and progressiveness. France, indeed, had already formed a so-called national school, before Handel and Haydn respectively laid the gigantic foundations on which the mammoth modern structures of oratorio and symphony have since been raised. Thus we see that the German nation, who must be universally acknowledged the musical nation *par excellence* of to-day, were in their artistic infancy not only merely receptive, but also feebly imitative; a sure sign of stagnant mediocrity, but clearly no obstacle to future original greatness.

Now, let us, turning to England, compare our condition with that of Germany at that epoch. It cannot be urged that England has suffered from a dearth of musical experience. Even in the time of Handel and Haydn, London was notoriously the happy hunting-ground of the profession. Already in those days we spent more money on music than any two other nations put together. Nor is this altogether parallel, as many have held, with the simulated refinement of a *nouveau riche*, who will have the best of everything which money can buy. The triumphs of Handel, the birth actually of oratorio and symphony, were celebrated in the British Isles. When Vienna and Berlin looked with a cold and

unappreciative gaze upon the efforts of the heaven-born tone-poets in their midst to gain a bare subsistence, London offered a competence to talented artists and composers of all nationalities. All this was so much education for our national taste. We learned to accept the novel harmonies and daring instrumentation of the musical revolutionists as soon as the rest of Europe, if not sooner. We early grasped a truth that Italy is yet blind to—namely, that perpetual melody and the constant evoking of passionate emotion are not the objects of true music. Music exists for the expression of varied emotions: sadness, longing, hope, triumph, aspiration towards the unobtained or the indefinite, calm fulfilment of an artistic conception of fitness and beauty; but besides these, monotony, long spells of unbroken quiescence, mental perturbation even to a positive sense of physical discomfort, are absolutely essential to relieve and heighten the more ecstatic emotions of pleasure called forth by a musical composition. We cannot always be burning with passion and reciting dramatic duets, or heading triumphal processions. We do not do so in real life. This is what the Italians have failed to recognise. Their staggering tenors and palpitating sopranos rave together down by the prompter's box in an almost unintermittent frenzy of passion; a very parody of life, bereft of many of its tranquil calms and minor impressions pleasurable or painful, each having its own special effect and value by contrast in relation to the rest of our lives. It is not only vivid impressions that are interesting; these heaped up one upon another constitute a plethora of overstrained excitement that will jade and exhaust the most passionate nature. There are countless experiences in life which leave us in a tranquil condition of enjoyment; and since these make up by far the greater portion of our existence, and are the vehicle of the more powerful emotions, are they not worthy of a prominent place in so comprehensive an index of human sentiment as music?

It is upon the early recognition of these true principles of music, and upon other traits of national character to which reference shall be made, that I would base a hope for England's musical future.

It is a significant fact that the Germans, who have established their pre-eminence in philosophy and most of the sciences, should have also produced the most earnest and real music. The French school, again, exactly echoes the national character, with its superficial brilliance and clever aptitude for the assimilation and reproduction of other people's more successful ideas. They cannot be said to have formed a school of serious music even yet. Of charming, graceful, or droll music, certainly; but before Gounod's *Faust*, they could not boast a single national grand opera, in the full sense of the word. There is no need to depreciate their many facile gifts; but what they owe to the Germans in philosophy and metaphysics, they owe to the Italians indirectly in music. The spirit is the same, if not the letter. The national flavour that has been imparted is one that palls and sinks into frivolous insignificance by the side of the colossal symphonies and chamber music of the Germans. French and Italian music is for

pleasure, for display, for high-pressure romance, or what you will; but German music is for a profound consideration of the problem of existence with its varied and contrasting emotion—now brimming over with high-spirited childish glee, like some of the Beethoven *scherzos*, now awakening the most powerful sympathies and the highest inspirations with its by turns grave and impassioned thoughtfulness.

We have seen that the character of a people is reflected in their music. May we not, therefore, hope something from this? The English character is not frivolous or superficial or ultraromantic. We possess many solid, earnest, steadfast qualities in common with the Germans. We have excelled in science and philosophy, and in imaginative literature. Above all, we have not militated, like the Parisians or the Italians, against music that we could not at the outset understand. We alone received the creations of the new prophet Richard Wagner with attention or respect. In spite of much in them that was contrary to our artistic sense, we have done full justice to a new departure in instrumentation, and a novel method of expressing situation—the entry, presence, or reminiscence of *dramatis personæ*—by *Leit-Motiven*. We have done this by subscribing for the efficient representation of operas that M. Pasdeloup and other enterprising cosmopolitans have laboured vainly to introduce in their entirety to the French public. Does all this go for nothing in the qualification for a musical people?

I have heard it remarked that the continental mode of life is eminently conducive to the early acquirement and subsequent fostering of musical talent. Doubtless it is so. I myself have experienced the delights of cheap German opera, efficient public bands and high-class concerts in many parts of the country, and have noted the care with which musical genius is almost invariably brought forward. But a marvellous change has lately come over our own land in this respect. One cannot see the crowds of enthusiasts week after week attend the Crystal Palace concerts, score in hand, or those others who wait for hours in St James's Hall previous to the chamber concerts, without acknowledging that here classical music is tightening its hold on the middle classes every day; while the rapt attention with which frivolous and pleasure-seeking throngs at the Promenade Concerts will listen to an inspired symphony or romantic pianoforte concerto, is indeed a genuine proof of the widely spreading ramifications of musical receptivity in England.

But let us now briefly consider the more important clause of the charge against us, namely, that we have no creative genius. It is true, looking back upon our musical past, we can find no names which may be fitly associated with even the second-rate foreign composers. We have never originated a school of music as national and characteristic as that of the French, meretricious though it be. We have been content, as were the Germans in their artistic infancy, to reflect the various styles that have flourished around us. Sterndale Bennett, by most considered our greatest representative musician, notoriously followed his master Mendelssohn, as Sir Julius Benedict has followed Weber. But I would humbly submit that England is still in her

musical infancy, when the imitative faculty precedes the birth of originality. And how is it we have failed to profit equally with other nations in the progress of artistic culture which has been going on around us for so many years? The secret lies, I think, in the peculiar conservatism which has ever attached to the English temperament. We do not easily assimilate the ideas of others; we are unc cosmopolitan to a degree. Whether from geographical causes—so powerful to influence character—or not, we have held aloof from that comradeship which binds continentals in so close an artistic union. Far from being one of the European family, we resemble an only child, wrapped up in its own ideas, and never associating freely with others, for want of the early habit of so doing. We are so proudly self-contained, that an Englishman in a foreign country is almost as much a stranger as a Hottentot. We are used to our own ways, and unaccustomed to yielding to those of others. A freemasonry existing among Europeans has stopped short at the English Channel, which I believe has much to answer for in this direction. Hence, new ideas, new theories, universally received abroad, have percolated but slowly through an obstructing mass of cautious reserve with us. The artistic spirit which has pervaded almost every corner of polite Europe is only now making itself felt, under the compelling influences of increased facility of travel and of the broader views of the age. When music shall have taken as high a place in our regard as it holds in the estimation of our contemporaries, I venture to predict there will be a future for musical England.

MISS RIVERS'S REVENGE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

MUCH as I disliked that young man, I was bound to confess that he looked provokingly handsome as he stood bareheaded in the moonlight watching the wreaths of smoke from his cigar curling about in the still air. I could now scan him quite at my ease. My courage had returned, and I felt myself insured against discovery. My only dread was that the two men would begin to talk secrets. In such a case, my keen sense of honour must, of course, make me reveal my presence. I made a firm resolution that I would not play at eavesdropping. Alas for poor humanity! In a minute I was straining my ears to catch every word. Yet how could I help it? Heritage Rivers was the subject of their discourse.

'I hope you found your companion at dinner a pleasant one?' said Mr Ramsay.

'O yes; very pleasant,' replied Mr Hope carelessly. 'She's a nice sort of a girl, I dare say.'

A nice sort of a girl! The wretched man! I hated him!

'We think a great deal more of her than that,' said that dear old Mr Ramsay.

'Indeed,' replied his companion, without evincing the slightest interest in the matter.

'Yes—indeed and indeed,' echoed my old friend. 'But, joking apart, did you not notice she bids fair to be a most beautiful woman?'

It would have needed little more to have

brought me from my lurking-place on purpose to kiss that good old man!

Vincent Hope laughed quietly. 'To tell you the truth,' he said, 'I don't think I noticed her much. She seemed to me of the ordinary school-girl type. I don't care much for school-girls.'

I dug my nails into my hands and ground my teeth. Handsome as the man looked in the moonlight, I could have killed him then and there.

'Yet,' said Mr Ramsay, 'I noticed she talked pretty freely to you.'

The shrug of Mr Hope's shoulders almost maddened me. 'Yes; but sad nonsense,' he said, 'although it was rather amusing at times. Of course, it's not fair to judge her now. She is very raw, and, I should say, rather awkward. If properly looked after, no doubt she will grow up to be a decent sort of a young woman.'

Raw and awkward! He spoke of me—me, whom many of my school-friends called Queen Heritage, from the stately and dignified manner I was supposed to assume at times. A decent sort of a young woman! That I should hear a man, one, moreover, in his own opinion a judge on such matters, gravely set this up as the standard to which I might arrive—if properly looked after. It was too much; the fall was too great. And as the horrible thought flashed across me that his description might be true, his prediction correct, tears of sheer mortification sprang into my eyes. Even Mr Ramsay's almost testy rejoinder gave me no comfort.

'O nonsense, Hope! She will grow up a beautiful, accomplished, and clever woman. You judge her wrongly. Talk to her again in the drawing-room; there, she will be more at home.'

'All right; I will,' the wretch answered.—'But at present I want to talk to you about more important things than young ladies. I have to-day been offered the editorship of the *Piccadilly Magazine*. Shall I take it?'

'I congratulate you. But it is too serious a matter to decide out here. We will talk it over by-and-by. We must join the ladies now. I see every one else has gone in.'

'Then I suppose we must,' said Mr Hope rather ruefully, and tossing his cigar away with a half-sigh.

I waited a minute; then I peered out, and at last ventured to creep round the laurel and reconnoitre. The broad back of my candid critic was just disappearing through the dining-room window. I shook my fist viciously at it. I watched Mr Ramsay follow his guest, saw the window close and the blind fall; then I flew at top speed to the library, whence I had made my exit, entered noiselessly, and threw myself into a chair, feeling that my life was blighted.

The room was faintly lit up; the door was closed; I was alone with my misery; for misery it was; I use the word soberly and advisedly, without a thought of jesting. Fortunately or unfortunately, I had heard myself appraised at my true value. My merits had been weighed by an impartial hand; I had been judged and condemned. I was a failure. 'Raw and awkward,' 'A decent sort of a young woman'—the words ate into my heart. No expressions could have been

devised which would have wounded me more deeply.

He would give me another chance in the drawing-room. Would he! I think not, Mr Vincent Hope. No power on earth shall take me there to-night. I turn the gas up, and look at myself in the mirror. My hair is dishevelled, my eyes are red, and I cannot help fancying that my nose looks rather coarse. Yes; it must be true; I am not even good-looking.

Beneficial as it may be for one who is not without vanity to learn the truth, I hate with a deadly hatred the man who has revealed it to me. Solemnly I declare, somehow, that some day I will have my Revenge. I am very young, which is an advantage to one who may have to wait a long time for a certain object. O yes; I can wait—whether ten, fifteen, or twenty years, I can wait; but I will have revenge, full revenge. So I raved on and on, growing more tragical every moment, until I broke down, and began to cry again.

I had barely dried my eyes, when Clara entered the room. 'What, Heritage!' she cried; 'you here! I have hunted high and low for you, but never thought of looking here. Come into the drawing-room; we must sing our duet.'

I pleaded a splitting headache; I could not bear the hot room. I should go to bed at once; and in spite of Clara's entreaties, to bed I went, and had the pleasure of dreaming that I was sticking stiletos and scissors into Mr Vincent Hope. This was so comforting, that I was quite sorry when morning came and I found it was but a dream.

'Wasn't he delightful?' was Clara's first question when we met.

'Wasn't who delightful?'

'Mr Hope, of course. The other men were fogies.'

'Now, Clara, look here. Once for all, I tell you I found that young man detestable—simply detestable! I hate him. I never met any one I took such a dislike to.'

Clara's blue eyes opened in amazement. 'I thought you got on so well together,' she said. 'He asked for you in the drawing-room, and seemed quite sorry to hear you were ill. We all liked him immensely.'

He asked after me! A piece of impertinence—a gratuitous insult—a piece of superfluous hypocrisy, which, were it possible, made my wish for revenge stronger.

'Well, I loathe him,' I said, 'and there's an end of it. I won't even talk about him.'

I was as good as my word; and Clara, from the want of a listener, was obliged to desist from ringing the changes in praise of Mr Hope.

I left Twickenham two or three days after this. As I drove to the station, Mr Hope—most likely on his way to the Ramsays' house—passed the carriage. Clara was with me, so the young man bowed to us collectively. I made no sign of recognition.

'Heritage,' said Clara, 'that was Mr Hope. Didn't you see him?'

'Was it?' I replied. 'I had quite forgotten what he was like.'

For a beginner, this was a pretty good fib. After telling it so calmly, I felt I was getting on. 'Raw and awkward!' O no! I did not forget,

either the words or the speaker. When I declare for revenge, I mean it.

Five years passed by. I was twenty-two. I had seen many people and many things. Either for better or worse, I had changed in much, but still retained my knack of never forgetting a foe or a friend. Incredible as it seems, my anger against Mr Hope was keen as ever—my wish for revenge as strong. The injury he had unwittingly done me had been greater than, even in my first burst of rage, I had imagined. His words during the interval kept recurring to my mind, and hindered the growth of proper confidence and self-esteem. A long series of pleasant little social triumphs alone permitted me to say at last that his prophecy had not been fulfilled. But now, after five years, the more I thought of the annoyance, even anguish, his words had caused me, the more vicious I felt towards him; the more resolved to compass revenge when the opportunity occurred. O yes; I was a good hater—not a doubt of it. I could carry my stone seven years in my pocket, then turn it and carry it seven years more, or twice seven years, never for a moment forgetting its ultimate destination.

But when should I have the chance of hurling it, and how should I act when the chance came? Except in the street, casually, I had never since met the man. Vincent Hope visited no friends of mine save the Ramsays. They left Twickenham shortly after my visit, and now lived a hundred miles from town. I had stayed with them several times, but my foe had never appeared. Of course I had heard a great deal about him. He was now quite a famous man. To keep myself posted up in the light literature of the day, I was compelled to read his books, and in honesty I am bound to say I admired them, although I detested the author of them. Surely we must meet some day. I went out a great deal, and I heard he was much sought after. But our paths as yet had not crossed.

It was winter. I was spending some weeks with new friends, who had taken a great fancy to me—kind hospitable people, who liked to have a constant stream of visitors passing, but very slowly, through their house. The Lightons were a wealthy county family, noted for their open-handed hospitality. I never stayed at a gayer or pleasanter place than Blaize House. It was not very large; but from the way it seemed to extend itself to accommodate the numerous guests, my belief is it must have been built on the plan of an accordion. I can only account for its capabilities by this theory.

Except from the tiny village which gave or took its name, Blaize House was miles away from everywhere; but its resources, so far as amusement went, made it immaterial in what part of the world it stood. The family consisted of Mr Lighton—called by every one, even his guests, the Squire; his wife, a fitting companion to him, who shared his pursuits, and heartily seconded the welcome he gave to every one; and two daughters, about my own age. These may be termed the nucleus, the standing congregation of the establishment. In addition, there were sons who turned up unexpectedly and at intervals; and two or three cousins were invariably sojourning there. Add to these, again, the floating

population in the shape of visitors who came and went, and you will realise that it was a merry house.

Breakfast was just over; we had been longer about it than usual, the weather being too damp and drizzly to tempt us out of doors. Letters were being read with the last cup of tea. The Squire selected one from his pile, and tossed it over to his wife, remarking that she would be glad to hear the good news it contained. Then it went from hand to hand until I had the pleasure of reading—

MY DEAR SQUIRE—I have just written the delightful word *Finis* at the bottom of a page, which is the last of my last immortal (!) production. I will do no more work for weeks, but will take the train to-morrow and come to Blaize House, in time, I hope, for dinner. I do not apologise for this short notice, knowing there is even more joy within your gates over the uninvited than the invited guest.—Yours always, VINCENT HOPE.

Vincent Hope! It must be my enemy. The allusion to his literary pursuits put that beyond a doubt. My time had come! I could not have selected a fairer field on which to mete out the vengeance I had stored up. As I read that letter, I positively blushed with pleasure, so vividly that I feared people might jump at entirely wrong conclusions. I thought of nothing all day but the way in which my enemy was delivered into my hands. The delight at having at last the chance of paying out the critic for his criticism produced a frame of mind which seemed to urge me to go into quiet corners and laugh at my own thoughts. I had plenty of time to mature my plans and draw soothing pictures of the effects of my revenge. I resolved to risk no chance meeting with the foe; and feeling that a good beginning would be half the battle, before six o'clock I went to my room to arm for the fray.

Remember, I am confessing, not jesting. I sent for my maid, and bade her take down my hair and brush it. If, as her deft fingers braided my locks to my satisfaction, I had thought the girl would have comprehended me, I might have quoted certain lines of Mrs Browning's which kept singing through my head:

Comb it smooth, and crown it fair;
I would look in purple pall, from the lattice down the wall,
And throw scorn on one that's there.

Anyway, she crowned it fair enough, and by my express desire, clad me in my most becoming gear. Then, a few minutes before the bell rang, I sent her away, and stood alone before the cheval glass, surveying myself with a contented smile. For my plan of revenge had at least the merit of simplicity; it was to win that man's admiration—if possible *his love*. Upon the day when he offered me the latter, and I coldly and scornfully rejected it, I should feel that I had squared all accounts between us in a manner highly satisfactory to myself.

How do women win men's love? I did not quite know; but I fancied, if conducted properly, the operation was not of a difficult nature. I hoped and believed I should succeed. Although my resolution reads badly, and sounds even worse,

I comforted myself by thinking that as I meant to refuse what I laid myself out to win, no one would dare to censure me or accuse me of very unbecoming conduct. And now what are my weapons with which to conquer?

I look at myself in the glass. It may read like vanity, but I feel that old Mr Ramsay's prediction is fairly verified. Although I blush as I appraise myself, I know I am no longer the slim school-girl—that I am something not, perhaps, far off a beautiful woman. I am tall. My figure is certainly good. My complexion will bear any test; and something tells me I could, if I wished, make my eyes dangerous. So much for nature. As for art, I have chosen the prettiest of many pretty gowns, and my gowns now have a knack of sitting well upon me; so I am not ashamed to walk gracefully across the room, and courtesying to myself in the glass, say approvingly to my double: 'Yes, Heritage Rivers, you have grown into a very decent sort of a woman—a very decent sort!' Having refreshed my memory by the repetition of that peculiarly galling phrase, I gather up my skirts and sally forth to victory.

Fortune favoured me. As the greatest stranger and last arrival, it would have been in Vincent Hope's province to take our hostess into the dining-room, had we not been favoured that day by the presence of a county magnate, whose claim to precedence could not be lightly overlooked. It seemed but natural and part of the plot that the Squire should present Mr Vincent Hope to Miss Rivers, and for the second time in their lives these two should be seated side by side sipping their soup in unison—but this time, if wounded vanity was to be the result of the contiguity, Miss Rivers would not be the victim.

So I began: 'You have come straight from town, Mr—Vincent—I fancied the Squire said? We all call him Squire, you know.'

'O yes. He is an old friend of mine. But he called me Vincent Hope, I suspect.'

This gave me what I wanted, an excuse for looking him full in the face—an act which, besides being a fitting tribute to his fame, enabled me to observe how time had treated him. So I lifted my lashes and looked straight at him. If Time had not been quite idle with him, it had treated him kindly. He was handsome as ever. The hair near his temples being just flecked with gray, did not detract from his good looks. I thought his features looked more marked, and the whole expression of his face more confident and powerful even than of old. He had won success, and, no doubt, fully realised and enjoyed the fact.

'Vincent Hope!' I echoed. 'Not *the* Vincent Hope?'

I guessed instinctively that flattery was not a bad gun with which to open fire. By this time his name was so well known that it would have been affectation to appear to misunderstand me. He bowed, and smiled.

'How delightful!' I exclaimed; my look, I am ashamed to say, confirming my words. 'Now, tell me how I should talk to you. Ought I to give you my opinion about all the characters in your books; or ought I to sit silent and awed, treasuring up every word of wit and wisdom you may let fall?'

'Neither, I must beg. I have just thrown off

the harness, and come down to enjoy the Squire's clover. I am trying to forget there is such a thing as work in the world.'

'Very well. I shall take you at your word; after, as in duty bound, saying, I have read all you have written, so far as I know.'

His wish to avoid the topic of his own achievements may have been a genuine one, but nevertheless he seemed pleased with my remark, and looking at me with a smile, said: 'Exchange is but fair. I scarcely heard what the Squire called you.'

'Rivers—Heritage Rivers.'

'Heritage Rivers,' he echoed musingly. 'It is an uncommon name; but I fancy I have heard it before.'

'Oh, please, don't say so, Mr Hope. I did think I had one original thing to boast of—my name. How would you like, after looking upon all your plots as original, to find them but plagiarisms?'

He laughed. 'Many are, I fear. But you are trespassing on forbidden ground. Let us seek fresh pastures.'

We did so. We talked all dinner-time. I think we talked about everything under the sun—talked, moreover, almost like old friends. When he differed from my opinions, he told me in well-chosen words why he differed. And as he spoke, I whispered ever and anon to myself: 'Raw and awkward—a decent sort of a woman.' Yet, now, Mr Hope was condescending enough not only to listen attentively to my words, but to reply to them as if they had weight with him. All this was very delightful. The first steps to revenge were smooth and pleasant ones; for there is no need to say that I hated him as much and felt as vindictive as ever.

He was walking straight to his fate. I felt it when, just before Mrs Lighton gave the signal for departure, he dropped his voice almost to a whisper, and was good enough to say that, to him, the peculiar charm of this particular dinner was that such an agreeable interchange of ideas would not be ended with the night, but might be resumed to-morrow. Coming as it did from such a famous person, I could only glance my thanks, blush, and look pleased at the compliment.

When, with the rest of my sex, I rose and walked to the door, I knew that his eyes were following me; and I knew also that, although clever, captious, critical those eyes might be, they could find little fault with my bearing or general demeanour.

At Blaize House it was understood that the gentlemen, especially the younger ones, were not allowed to linger long over the wine. When they entered the drawing-room, I was sitting, almost hidden from sight, in a recess near the window. I noticed, as he came through the door, that Mr Hope looked round, as if in search of some one, and as, when at last he discovered my retreat, his search seemed at an end, I could only think its object was myself. However, we had little more to say to each other this evening. All the children of the house were his friends, and had many questions to ask him. We had music and singing as usual; but I made some conventional excuse, and did not take my share in them. Before we parted for the night, Vincent Hope came to my side.

'Surely you sing, Miss Rivers?' he said.

'A little. But I'm not in the mood to sing to-night.'

He pressed me to make the attempt; but I refused. Thinking I had done quite enough for the first evening, I kept my voice in reserve. But I talked to him for a short time about music, and found him well versed in the art, and, of course, an unsparing critic. He was very hard on the ordinary drawing-room playing and singing, and by no means complimentary to the performers of the evening. I laughed, and told him how thankful I felt that something had warned me not to show my poor skill to such an able but severe judge. My words led him to believe that my talent for music was a very third-rate one. This was exactly what I wished him to think.

He was soon drawn away from my side, and we spoke no more until the general good-night took place, and the men went off to the billiard-room, and my own sex to their couches. Once more I courtesied to Miss Rivers in the cheval glass, and told her she had surpassed my most sanguine expectations. Then, in a very happy frame of mind, I went to bed.

HISTRIONS IN LOW LIFE.

I HAVE observed that many Londoners of the middle class, whether those whose avocations take them to and from the City daily, or those with more leisure at their command, have, as a rule, one favourite crossing-sweeper whom they tip more or less frequently, thereby offering a salve to their consciences which enables them to treat the claims of the rest of the fraternity with sublime indifference. In this respect I profess to be in nowise different from my neighbours. The one crossing-sweeper whom I make a point of subsidising is a young shaver of ten, Tommy by name, whose vantage-point is at the corner of the suburban road in which I reside. Tommy and I have been the best of friends for the last two years. The moment his quick eyes catch sight of me in the distance, let his occupation at the moment be what it may, whether he is lazily blinking against the sun-smitten wall with his hands in his pockets, or exercising his sharp white teeth on a crust of bread-and-cheese, forth comes his broom with a flourish, and no matter how well swept his crossing may have been before, an extra touch is given to it in honour of my advent.

Tommy is a bright-eyed, smiling young rascal, whose cheerfulness seems never to desert him. It matters not whether he is soaked with rain or shivering in an east wind, he greets you with the same ingenuous grin. Sometimes I have said to him: 'You ought to be at home on such a day as this; you will catch your death of cold.' To which his invariable reply has been: 'Father's in the hospital, and mother's got the rheumatiz;' as though the point at issue was thereby clinched, and all further discussion rendered supererogatory.

But this has been going on for so long a time that I begin to have my doubts as to the perfect truthfulness of Tommy's statements. His father

can scarcely have been in the hospital for two years; his mother can hardly be laid up with rheumatism from January to December. There are other small circumstances which tend to make me suspicious. More than once, charitable ladies with youngsters of their own have taken pity on Tommy's tatters, and have given him a bundle of second-hand clothes, or a pair or two of boots which had still some service left in them. For a few days afterwards Tommy would look wonderfully smart, almost too smart, indeed, for his occupation; and then all at once he would lapse into his original state of looped and windowed raggedness. Was it possible, I asked myself, that the boy's added respectability had a tendency to reduce his receipts at the crossing—that the pockets of the charitable were more readily reached by a boy in tatters, than by one clad in the cast-off garments of gentility? Or could it be that the gifts of clothing had found their way to the pawnbroker's to help to make up the rent?

More than once I have seen a by-no-means attractive-looking female, whose complaint—if she had one—seemed more nearly allied to gin-and-water than rheumatism, hovering round the boy, apparently with the view of relieving him of his earnings at stated intervals. Could this woman be Tommy's mother? For his sake, I hoped not, and yet it looked suspiciously like it, more especially as she one day invoked a blessing on my head in a strong Irish accent, having apparently a knowledge of me as one of the boy's regular patrons.

I have sometimes thought that Tommy's ingenuous grin and unfailing cheerfulness in all kinds of weather may be as much a portion of his stock-in-trade as his tattered breeches or his stumpy broom, and that he has made the discovery that people's pockets may be reached by two bright eyes and a pleasant smile, quite as readily as by a snivel and a whine.

It is a pleasant thing to know that the far-reaching arms of the School Board have at length caught Tommy in their grasp, and will not let him go again till they have planted in his mind such seeds of knowledge as will, one may reasonably hope, expand and grow and bear good fruit in the years to come.

To the whining category pertained a certain young gentleman of the broom whom I fell in with one frosty afternoon as I was making my way homeward by a route which I rarely traverse. I did not see him till I was within a few yards of him, and then his utterly wretched and woe-begone appearance at once challenged my attention. He was apparently about a couple of years older than Tommy, but was a much bigger and more strongly built lad. Unmistakable tears were standing in the corners of eyes that looked inflamed with much crying, while his dirty cheeks showed the zigzag lines of tears that had already traversed them. He held a frowzy broom under one arm; and when he was not trying to warm his purple fingers with his chilly breath, his teeth chattered loudly enough to attract the attention of any one who passed him close by. I stopped instinctively. 'What is the matter with you?' I asked, rather inconsequentially, I admit, seeing that his appearance pretty well told its own tale.

'O sir, I'm so cold! Had nothink to eat

since yesterday,' was the reply; and with that, two big tears trickled down his cheeks, and his teeth began to chatter worse than ever.

Nothing to eat since yesterday, and it was now four P.M., and the mercury nearly down to freezing-point! Already my fingers were groping in the pocket in which I carry my loose change. 'Here, take this, and get yourself some hot coffee and bread-and-butter,' I said; and with that I hurried away with an unwanted moisture in my eyes, for I have youngsters of my own at home.

I did not go that way again for more than a week, and when I did, the frost had disappeared, and the weather was mild and muggy. I had forgotten all about the boy, till my eyes fell on him for the second time. A benevolent-looking old lady had just stopped to speak to him. I halted for a moment to listen to his reply.

'O mum, I'm so cold! Had nothink to eat since yesterday;' and with that his teeth began to chatter in a way that left you to infer their soundness, and with his sleeve he wiped a tear from the end of his nose.

'Poor boy!' I heard the old lady say as she began to fumble for her purse; but with that I hurried away, with a tingling desire in my fingers to box the young rascal's ears.

And yet there was evidently histrionic talent of no mean order in the lad. Where and how had he learned the secret of making his tears flow at will? Many an actor of repute on the mimic stage would give half his worldly fortune if he could boast of the same accomplishment.

My daughter and I, when on our way to visit at the house of a certain friend, had more than once noticed a very natty, clean, old woman, who evidently looked upon the crossing at the entrance to a certain semi-fashionable square as her private property. We learned afterwards that when the weather was very bad, the crossing was allowed to take care of itself, and that when it rained or blew, Old Margery remained quietly in the shelter of the one little room she called her home. At other times, after her crossing had once been well swept, she was generally to be seen sitting on an old kitchen-chair at the corner of the square, her broom resting against the wall by her side, and her mittened hands crossed on an old-fashioned calf-bound volume which lay on her lap.

My daughter was much interested in the old woman, and never passed her without bringing out her purse. One day she stayed behind for a few minutes to talk with her. When she overtook me, she said: 'What do you think, papa? That old woman at the corner—I ought perhaps to call her an old lady—is a clergyman's daughter; and the book she nearly always has on her knees is a volume of her father's sermons, which she carries about with her. How sad to think that a person brought up as she must have been should be reduced to sweeping a crossing in her old age!'

I too felt that it was sad, and when I reached my friend's house, I spoke of it to him. He laughed his usual pleasant but somewhat cynical laugh. 'I am sadly afraid that Old Margery, as we call her, is little better than a venerable humbug,' was his reply. 'I took an opportunity one day of putting a few questions to her. She persisted in her statement that her father had been in the Church; but when pressed to give the

name of his parish, she could only reply vaguely that it was somewhere "down Ham'shire way," that she had not been there since she was a girl, and that she had forgotten the name of it. She thought that her father had been a rector, but admitted that possibly he had been only a curate. She then went on to tell me that at one time she used to know all the "collicks," as she called them, by heart, but that now her memory was failing her. Still, she was thankful that she could see to read her large print Prayer-book and the volume of beautiful sermons written by her father. On examining the volume in question, I found that there was no author's name to it; but on turning to the preface, the first words that met my eyes were: "This collection of discourses, written by various hands, is intended," &c. I gave her the book back without a word. As I said before, I am afraid Old Margery is a humbug; but people are easily taken in; and among the well-to-do, kind-hearted ladies of this neighbourhood, her assertion that her father was a clergyman is generally credited, and serves, I doubt not, to bring in what, for a person in her position, must be a very comfortable revenue.

'Another histron in low life,' was my unspoken comment.

IS GELATINE NUTRITIOUS?

Is a series of papers on the Chemistry of Cookery, which have appeared in *Knowledge*, Mr W. Mattieu Williams writes as follows: 'Our grandmothers believed gelatine to be highly nutritious, prepared it in the form of jellies for invalids, and estimated the nutritive value of their soups by the consistency of the jelly which they formed on cooling, which thickness is due to the gelatine they contain. Isinglass, which is simply the swim-bladder of the sturgeon and similar fishes cut into shreds, was especially esteemed, and sold at high prices. This is the purest natural form of gelatine.

'About fifty or sixty years ago, the French Academy of Sciences appointed a bone-soup commission, consisting of some of the most eminent savants of the period. They worked for above ten years upon the problem submitted to them—that of determining whether or not the soup made by boiling bones until only their mineral matter remained solid, is, or is not, a nutritious food for the inmates of hospitals, &c. In the voluminous Report which they ultimately submitted to the Academy, they decided in the negative.

'Baron Liebig became the popular exponent of their conclusions, and vigorously denounced gelatine, as not merely a worthless article of food, but as loading the system with material that demands wasteful effort for its removal.

'The Academicians fed dogs on gelatine alone, and found that they speedily lost flesh, and ultimately died of starvation. A multitude of similar experiments showed that gelatine alone would not support animal life, and hence the conclusion that pure gelatine is worthless as an article of food, and that ordinary soups containing gelatine owed their nutritive value to their other constituents.

'Subsequent experiments proved that while animals fed on gelatine-soup, formed into a soft

paste with bread, lost flesh and strength rapidly, they recovered their original weight when to this same food only a very small quantity of the sapid and odorous principles of meat were added. Thus, in the experiments of Messrs Edwards and Balzac, a young dog that had ceased growing, and had lost one-fifth of its original weight when fed on the bread and gelatine for thirty days, was next supplied with the same food, but to which was added, twice a day, only two table-spoonfuls of soup, made from horse-flesh. There was an increase of weight on the first day, and "in twenty-three days the dog had gained considerably more than its original weight, and was in the enjoyment of vigorous health and strength."

'All this difference was due to the savoury constituents of the four table-spoonfuls of meat-soup, which soup contained the juices of the flesh, to which, as already stated, its flavour is due.

'The inferences drawn by M. Edwards from the whole of his experiments are the following: "1. That gelatine alone is insufficient for alimentation. 2. That although insufficient, it is not unwholesome. 3. That gelatine contributes to alimentation, and is sufficient to sustain it when it is mixed with a due proportion of other products which would themselves prove insufficient if given alone. 4. That gelatine extracted from bones, being identical with that extracted from other parts—and bones being richer in gelatine than other tissues, and able to afford two-thirds of their weight of it—there is an incontestable advantage in making them serve for nutrition in the form of soup, jellies, paste, &c., always, however, taking care to provide a proper admixture of the other principles in which the gelatine-soup is defective. 5. That to render gelatine-soup equal in nutritive and digestible qualities to that prepared from meat alone, it is sufficient to mix one-fourth of meat-soup with three-fourths of gelatine-soup; and that, in fact, no difference is perceptible between soup thus prepared and that made solely from meat. 6. That in preparing soup in this way, the great advantage remains, that, while the soup itself is equally nourishing with meat-soup, three-fourths of the meat which would be requisite for the latter by the common process of making soup are saved and made useful in another way—as by roasting, &c. 7. That jellies ought always to be associated with some other principles to render them both nutritive and digestible."

'The reader may make a very simple experiment on himself by preparing first a pure gelatine-soup from isinglass, or the prepared gelatine commonly sold, and trying to make a meal of this with bread alone. Its insipidity will be evident with the first spoonful. If he perseveres, it will become not merely insipid, but positively repulsive; and should he struggle through one meal and then another without any other food between, he will find it, in the course of time (varying with constitution and previous alimentation), positively nauseous. Let him now add to it some of Liebig's Extract of Meat, and he will at once perceive the difference.

'It would seem that gelatine alone, although containing the elements required for nutrition,

* Londe, 'Nouveaux Eléments d'Hygiène,' Second Edition, vol. ii., p. 73.

requires something more to render it digestible. We shall probably be not far from the truth if we picture it to the mind as something too smooth, too neutral, too inert, to set the digestive organs at work, and that it therefore requires the addition of a decidedly sapid something that shall make these organs act. I believe that the proper function of the palate is to determine our selection of such materials; that its activity is in direct sympathy with that of all the digestive organs; and that if we carefully avoid the vitiation of our natural appetites, we have in our mouths, and the nervous apparatus connected therewith, a laboratory that is capable of supplying us with information concerning some of the chemical relations of food which is beyond the grasp of the analytical machinery of the ablest of our scientific chemists.'

MAUD OF THE MANSE.

BY ALEXANDER ANDERSON ('SURFACEMAN').

I sit to-night, and, reading, hear
Stern Vikings shouting in my ear,
And see them lean against the mast,
Their long hair streaming in the blast;
Till, weary with the battle-song,
The fight, the deeds of blood and wrong,
I fling the Danish poet by,
To dream and sit with open eye.

The weary throb of human feet
Is heard along the stony street;
But as I dream, it dies away,
And leaves me with a summer day.
I see sweet woods, with green expanse
Of leaves that almost hide the Manse,
From which is seen in summer glow
The valley of Glencairn below,
Whose winding river in its bed
Gleams like a broadened silver thread
Between the spaces which the trees
Have left for sunshine and the breeze
To enter in. But lo! what call
Brings something fairer than them all;
As if some wind had gently thrown
A tiny rosebud all unblown
Into my dream, and by my knee
Stands soft, and shy, and sweet to see.
Who can it be with sunny glance,
But Maud, the fairy of the Manse?
A tiny, happy, six-year old,
With curls that shine a paler gold
Upon a brow that feels their touch,
And lightens into mirth at such.
'Why, Maud, come, sit upon my knee,
And laugh and prattle unto me.
I want to watch your sweet blue eyes
Fill with the sunshine of surprise,
And drink the childhood of their glance;
So, come to me, elfin Maud of the Manse.

'Maud of the Manse, as we sit to-night,
Your golden head has made a light
Within the room; and I can see
The very spirit of infancy
Wave half-seen little snowy wings,
Till the room is full of fairy things.

'Maud of the Manse, can your memory go
Back to less than a year ago?
When the winds of a summer afternoon
Were busy humming their sweetest tune;
When the flowers shook at their low, sweet call;
But you were the sweetest of them all.
What did you give me that summer day
To treasure up and to take away?
The tiniest curl of your flaxen hair,
So bright, so light, and so golden fair,
That it lay in my hand—Ah, do not laugh—
Like the point of a sunbeam broken off;
And best of all, such a gentle kiss—
Just the thing to get from a little Miss—
Soft, and shy, with a touch of fear
That my bearded lip should come so near.
But where have I laid that little curl,
From the sunny head of a fairy girl?
Between the leaves, no doubt, of a book.
But wait a moment, and I will look.
Alas! as I make to lift from my knee
My fairy guest, to go and see,
I waken up from my half-hour's trance,
And fled is little Maud of the Manse.

I hear no more through that afternoon
The summer winds at their low sweet tune;
Nor the murmur of the Cairn between
Its banks of meadows grassy green;
But instead, outside, in the stony street,
The weary echo of passing feet.

Gone is the fairy of my dream,
The rustle of leaves and the shining stream;
But still for one half-hour to me
She has prattled sitting upon my knee,
And I have wound for a moment there
My fingers in her silken hair;
And hearing her voice, I well could deem
Myself in the fairyland of a dream.

Maud of the Manse, so pure and sweet,
May the world be smooth to thy tender feet;
And the unborn years keep their choicest good
To fall like dew on thy maidenhood,
Which, when it comes, with its gentle power,
Will crown thy beauty's glorious dower,
And make thee queen of the Cairn till thou,
With thy laughing eyes and thy sunny brow,
Be another Annie of Maxwellton,
For a lover to breathe in thine ear alone
The music that maidens like to hear
When love blossoms out like the spring of the
year.

O happy that lover, beyond all things,
If he gains thy heart for the song he sings.

This is my wish, O Maud, for thee,
For sitting in fancy on my knee,
Talking the while in that artless speech,
Which the heart of childhood can only reach.
But now, when the music has fled away
With the leaves, the winds, and the summer day,
I only hear outside, in the street,
The weary echo of passing feet.

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